

# Psychological trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder

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The empirical foundation for post-traumatic stress disorder has continued a pattern of steady development over the past 10–12 years. This review reveals that the immediate past year was marked by particularly strong work in the areas of epidemiology, health-related aspects of the disorder, and identification of risk predictors. In contrast, treatment interventions for post-traumatic stress disorder remain a research target that warrants greater attention.

Current Opinion in Psychiatry 1994, 7:480–485

## Introduction

The early mainstay of trauma-related investigations was assessment, and this focus on development of strong measurement tools enabled the field to progress rapidly. The emerging maturity of the field is currently being demonstrated by outstanding work on the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and the identification of risk factors and potential causal mechanisms of stress-related maladjustment. Combat veterans and disaster victims were the predominant target populations for early development of the field, and they continue to be so. However, investigation of new populations is broadening our perspective on the range and form of adjustment problems that result from the all too common experiences of extreme stress.

## Assessment

### Psychometric tests, interviews, and diagnosis

Advances in assessment this year were led by Foa *et al.* [1] who developed the PTSD Symptom Scale to assess the 17 major diagnostic symptoms from DSM-III-R. The measure demonstrated strong psychometric properties in its initial evaluation. Watson *et al.* [2] evaluated the relative performance of four existing PTSD measures: the Mississippi Scale, the PTSD Interview, the Keane PTSD (PK) Scale of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, and the Diagnostic Interview Schedule's PTSD module. All four measures functioned comparably in detecting the presence or absence of PTSD. However, the Mississippi Scale and PTSD Interview surpassed the others as measures of symptom severity. King *et al.* [3] used item response theory, a promising new method for psychometric development, to test the relative diagnostic contributions of each of the Mississippi Scale's 35

items. Recommendations for scale improvements were presented. Zimering *et al.* [4] evaluated the DSM-III criteria for PTSD by operationalizing key symptoms using experimental tasks. This study provided important validation information regarding the diagnostic criteria.

An additional set of issues that received attention this year included dissociation, personality characteristics, and neuropsychological functioning of individuals with PTSD. Bremner *et al.* [5] demonstrated the performance of a new DSM-IV structured interview for dissociative disorders, and Talbert *et al.* [6] applied the NEO Personality Inventory to combat veterans. The former study showed the expected higher rates of dissociative disorder among PTSD patients and the latter showed PTSD patients to be extremely high on neuroticism and low on extraversion, openness, and agreeableness. Finally, three studies [4,7,8] examined the extent to which memory problems, a common clinical complaint among PTSD patients, were observable on standardized neuropsychological tests. The data indicate only mild impairments which may be a byproduct of attentional problems or depressed affect, or both.

Finally, the important issue of gender bias in the assessment of PTSD was addressed by Becker and Lamb [9]. They found that diagnostic impressions of mental health clinicians varied depending on the gender of the patient and of the clinician. Overall, if an abused patient was described as female, they were more likely to receive a diagnosis of borderline personality disorder. Across clinicians, women were relatively more likely to apply a PTSD diagnosis instead.

### Psychophysiological methods

Two articles which appeared during the past year [10,11] move beyond the diagnostic use of psychophysiological

## Abbreviation

PTSD—post-traumatic stress disorder.

34. Lucey JV, Butcher G, Clare AW, Dinan TG: **The Anterior Pituitary Responds Normally to Protirelin in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: Evidence to Support a Neuroendocrine Serotonergic Deficit.** *Acta Psychiatr Scand* 1993, 87:384-388.
  35. Barr LC, Goodman WK, McDougle CJ, Delgado PL, Heninger GR, Charney DS, Price LH: **Tryptophan Depletion in Patients with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder who Respond to Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors.** *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 1994, 51:309-317.
- Short-term reductions in free plasma tryptophan were induced in 15 obsessive-compulsive patients who had profited from treatment with serotonin reuptake inhibitors in a double-blind, placebo-controlled crossover design. Tryptophan depletion produced elevations in depressed ratings, but not in rated obsessions and compulsions.
36. Baxter LR, Phelps ME, Mazziotta JC, Guze BH, Schwartz JM, Selin CE: **Local Cerebral Glucose Metabolic Rates in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 1987, 44:211-218.
  37. Benkelfat C, Nordahl TE, Semple WE, King C, Murphy DL, Cohen RM: **Local Cerebral Glucose Metabolic Rates in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 1990, 47:840-848.
  38. Calabrese G, Columbo C, Bonfanti A, Scotti G, Scarone S: **Caudate Nucleus Abnormalities in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: Measurements of MRI Signal Intensity** *Psychiatry Res* 1993, 50:89-92.
  39. Rauch SL, Jenike MA, Alpert NM, Baer L, Breiter H, Savage CR, Fischman AJ: **Regional Cerebral Blood Flow Measured During Symptom Provocation in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Using Oxygen 15-Labeled Carbon Dioxide and Positron Emission Tomography.** *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 1994, 51:62-70.
  40. Montgomery SA, McIntyre A, Osterheider M, Sarteschi P, Zitter W, Zohar J, Birkett M, Wood AJ, Lilly European OCD Study Group: **A Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Study of Fluoxetine in Patients with DSM-III-R Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *Eur Neuropsychopharmacol* 1993, 3:143-152.
- Three fixed daily doses of fluoxetine were compared in a double-blind, multi-center, placebo-controlled study of 218 patients with OCD. Results indicated efficacy of fluoxetine for treating OCD, and no difference between fluvoxamine and placebo in the rates of reported side effects.
41. Greist JH, Jefferson JW, Kobak KA, Katzelnick DJ, Serlin RC: **Efficacy and Tolerability of Serotonin Transport Inhibitors in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: A Metaanalysis.** *Arch Gen Psychiatry* (in press).
- A meta-analysis was conducted on the results of four large, multi-center, placebo-controlled trials of clomipramine, fluoxetine, fluvoxamine, and sertraline for the treatment of OCD. The efficacy of all four active compounds was demonstrated, with clomipramine superior to the other three, that did not differ among themselves.
42. Rasmussen SA, Eisen JL, Pato MT: **Current Issues in the Pharmacologic Management of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *J Clin Psychiatry* 1993, 54:4-9.
  43. Foa EB, Kozak MJ, Liebowitz M, Gorfinkle K, Campeas R, Stehle S, Street L, Riggs D, Franklin M, Davies S, Hearst D, DelBene D, Nixon W: **Treatment of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder by Behavior Therapy, Clomipramine and their Combination: Preliminary Results of a Multicenter Double Blind Controlled Trial.** Poster presented at the Annual meetings of Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy, Atlanta, Georgia; November, 1993.
  44. Freund BV, Foa EB, Kozak MJ, Hembree E: **Comparisons of OCD Outcome Among Clomipramine, Fluvoxamine, Placebo, and Behavior Therapy.** Presented at the 25th annual meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy, New York; 1991.
  45. Abel J: **Exposure with Response Prevention and Serotonergic Antidepressants in the Treatment of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: A Review and Implications for Interdisciplinary Treatment.** *Behav Res Ther* 1993, 31:463-478.
  46. Hiss H, Foa EB, Kozak MJ: **A Relapse Prevention Program for the Treatment of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *J Consult Clin Psychol* 1994, 62:801-808.
  47. Steketee GS: **Treatment of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** New York: Guilford Press; 1993.
  48. Foa EB, Wilson RW: **Hor Endlich auf Damit** [in German]. Wilhelm Heyne Verlag; Munchen, Germany; 1993.
  49. March JS, Mullen K, Herbel B: **Behavioral Psychotherapy for Children and Adolescents with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: An Open Trial of a New Protocol-Driven Treatment Package.** *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry* 1994, 33:333-341.
- Positive results of uncontrolled treatment of 15 children and adolescents by behavior therapy plus serotonin reuptake inhibitors are described.
50. Apter A, Ratzoni G, King RA, Weizman A, Iancu I, Binder M, Riddle MA: **Fluvoxamine Open Label Treatment of Adolescent Inpatients with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder or Depression.** *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry* 1994, 33:342-348.
  51. Rapoport JL, Leonard HL, Swedo SE, Lenane MC: **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder in Children and Adolescents: Issues in Management.** *J Clin Psychiatry* 1993 54(suppl):27-29.
  52. Cooper M: **A Group for Families of Obsessive Compulsive Persons.** *J Contemp Hum Serv* May 1993:301-307.
  53. Goodman WK, McDougle CJ, Barr LC, Aronson SC, Price LH: **Biological Approaches to Treatment Resistant Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *J Clin Psychiatry* 1993, 54:16-26.
  54. Jenike MA, Rauch SL: **Managing the Patient with Treatment Resistant Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: Current Strategies.** *J Clin Psychiatry* 1994, 55:11-17.
- Pharmacologic, behavioral, and neurosurgical approaches to patients with treatment-resistant OCD are reviewed, and recommendations are offered.
55. Drummond LM: **The Treatment of Severe, Chronic, Resistant Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.** *Br J Psychiatry* 1993, 163:223-229.
  56. Browne M, Horn E, Jones T: **The Benefits of Clomipramine-Fluoxetine Combination in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *Can J Psychiatry* 1993, 38:242-243.
  57. McDougle CJ, Goodman WK, Leckman JF, Lee NC, Heninger GR, Price LH: **Haloperidol Addition in Fluvoxamine-Refractory Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 1994, 51:302-308.
- Thirty-four people with OCD, who were refractory to fluvoxamine, were given adjunctive haloperidol or placebo in a double-blind, randomized trial. Only patients with chronic tic disorders showed reduction of OCD symptoms with adjunctive haloperidol.
58. McDougle CJ, Goodman WJ, Price LH: **Dopamine Antagonists in Tic-Related and Psychotic Spectrum Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *J Clin Psychiatry* 1994, 55:24-31.
  59. Grady TA, Pigott TA, L'Heureux F, Hill JL, Bernstein SE, Murphy DL: **Double-Blind Study of Adjuvant Buspirone for Fluoxetine-Treated Patients with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.** *Am J Psychiatry* 1993, 150:819-821.

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measures into hypothesis testing about the hormonal, subcortical, and cortical mechanisms of PTSD. Another psychophysiological study [12] is only the second to examine information-processing features of PTSD from an electrophysiological perspective using event-related potentials. This work offers a measurement link to attention and concentration problems associated with the disorder.

## Epidemiology

Recent years have seen several outstanding studies of prevalence and risk factors associated with PTSD. This year, three new studies were published. Resnick *et al.* [13••] reported on the prevalence of potentially traumatic events and PTSD in a nationally representative US sample of women. Lifetime probability for exposure to any potentially traumatic event was an astonishing 69%; lifetime and current rates of PTSD were 12.3 and 4.6%, respectively. Furthermore, over 35% of the sample reported exposure to some type of crime over the course of their lives, and PTSD was three times more likely to occur following exposure to a crime than any other type of potentially traumatic event studied.

A second study [14•] assessed the prevalence and effects of potentially traumatic events among undergraduates. Findings showed that 84% of students had experienced at least one potentially traumatic event and over 30% had experienced four or more.

Norris and Kaniasty [15••] assessed victims of violent crimes, victims of property crimes, and nonvictims at three points over a 15-month period. Most crime victims had problematic emotional reactions following the experience that persisted for at least 3 months, although many improved by 9 months. Those who did exhibit problems at 9 months continued to be distressed at the 15-month assessment; this was most true for those who had been exposed to violent crime.

## Psychopathology: symptoms

### Effects on memory

One of the most prominent issues from the past year is the question of forgotten and recovered memories of childhood trauma, especially sexual abuse. One aspect of its importance is the fact that inability to specify an event (even if due to forgetting) technically precludes the PTSD diagnosis. The issues in the forensic realm are presented by Loftus [16•], with particular emphasis on the potential role of suggestion by psychotherapists in the process of memory (re)construction. An empirical attempt to address the normative frequency of childhood abuse that is forgotten and then recalled was also published [17•].

### Comorbidity

The well-documented high rates of co-occurrence of other mental disorders with PTSD was extended to personality disorders. Southwick *et al.* [18] demonstrated comorbidity rates as high as 83% for borderline personality disorder among an inpatient sample of combat veterans with PTSD.

### Neuroendocrine features

Ongoing investigation and theorizing by Yehuda *et al.* [19•,20] in relation to hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis alterations in PTSD was extended in the past year by an integrative review and an empirical study. This work promotes the perspective that enduring hormonal changes are associated with chronic forms of PTSD and these changes are intimately tied to adjustment.

### Implications for physical health

A particularly interesting set of studies addressed the relationship between physical health and sexual assault or childhood sexual victimization. Two studies recruited medical outpatients [21•,22] and found that patients with functional disorders report more sexual trauma than do those with organic disorders. A third study [23] recruited adult sexual assault victims from a rape crisis center and found that physical complaints and use of medical services were higher for the assault victims in relation to the comparison group. In addition, the assault victims sought medical services to relieve their distress rather than mental health services. The fourth study [24••] used a large community-based sample to examine reports of sexual assault and their relationship to current health status. Findings indicated that women with a sexual assault history rated their health status as lower and reported more symptoms across various organ systems relative to women without such a history.

## Psychopathology: populations

### Children in disasters

The effects of technological and natural disasters on the mental health of children have received relatively little attention. To address this deficiency, Division 12 of the American Psychological Association issued task force reports [25,26] summarizing the literature on the untoward effects of disasters on children and the related literature on treatment intervention.

A longitudinal study of the effects of disasters by Green *et al.* [27••] showed that children who survived the Buffalo Creek dam collapse, West Virginia, USA, had reduced prevalence of PTSD 17 years later (from 32 to 7%). Pynoos *et al.* [28] studied the effects of the 1988 Armenian earthquake on children from three cities and found that those from towns closest to the epicenter reported more PTSD symptomatology [29]. Shannon *et*

*al.* [30] examined over 5600 children who were exposed to Hurricane Hugo in the USA and found that 5% of the sample reported sufficient symptoms to reach PTSD criteria. Further negative effects of disasters on children were found by Durkin *et al.* [31] who observed negative changes on measures of incontinence and aggression by children after a flooding disaster in Bangladesh.

### Combat and war-zone survivors

Findings from research conducted on the veterans of the Persian Gulf War include several studies that confirm the noxious effects of exposure to graves registration duty [32•,33,34,35•]. Perconte *et al.* [36] also studied the effects of this war and found increased trauma symptoms among those reservists deployed to combat areas compared with nondeployed reservists. Impairment was a direct function of war-zone stress exposure. Similarly, Southwick *et al.* [37] found some distress at 1 month after return to the USA, but observed a gradual increase in stress symptoms and likely cases of PTSD at the 6-month follow up.

### Victims of transportation disaster

Three studies [38–40] were published as part of a continuing series related to the Herald of Free Enterprise ferry disaster in the UK. Another rapidly developing target for trauma research is the so-called person-under-train incident and its effects on railway drivers. Collectively, four studies [41–43,44•] indicated that (1) witnessing, and having indirect responsibility for violent injury, dismemberment, or death, produces heightened biological stress and psychological distress; (2) approximately 17% of the affected drivers may meet criteria for a PTSD diagnosis in connection with a person-under-train incident; and (3) a tendency exists for initial reactions to recede over the period of a few months to 1 year. Two complementary studies concerning the impact of motor vehicle accidents [45•,46•] indicate that chronic psychosocial morbidity, including PTSD, often follows these accidents.

### Victims of torture

An excellent study [47•] examined the chronic adjustment of political prisoners who had been tortured in Turkey. Key features included the creation of a control group of nontortured political activists who were matched to the torture group on the basis of age, sex, marital status, sociocultural status, as well as political ideology and involvement. The group comparisons revealed diagnostic differences exclusively limited to the PTSD category, with lifetime and current PTSD rates of 33 and 18%, respectively.

## Psychopathology: individual differences

### Variations in exposure to potentially traumatic events

Three studies with children and adolescents added to the evidence that event characteristics influence the course of postevent adjustment. The first [48•] determined that longer duration of sexual abuse and the use of threat or violence by the perpetrator were associated with a greater likelihood of PTSD. The second study [49] also showed that event-exposure variables (perceived hurricane severity and self-rated damage to the home) were associated with greater symptom reports. The third study [50] demonstrated that juvenile offenders may experience substantial (24%) rates of PTSD and that severity of symptoms is related to degree of exposure to violence.

With regard to traumatized adults, Fontana and Rosenheck [51] found that war-zone stress had the strongest impact on development of chronic combat-related PTSD. Similarly, a creative study by Smith *et al.* [52] combined data from three disasters and found a dose-response relationship between exposure to the disasters and psychological symptomatology.

### Genetic factors

Skre *et al.* [53] found that, when compared with a proband group which met criteria for exclusively nonanxiety disorders (primarily mood and substance abuse disorders), only co-twins of anxiety probands had a PTSD diagnosis. Importantly, from the genetic perspective, the prevalence for PTSD was twice as high for monozygotic co-twins as for dizygotic co-twins.

### Gender

Several studies have continued the trend of findings that indicate both girls and adult women are at higher risk for developing PTSD after a potentially traumatic experience. In the past year, the bulk of these findings were in relation to disasters of various sorts [27•,28,30,52].

### Previous potentially traumatic experiences

Findings from crime victims [15•], railway accidents [42], motor vehicle accidents [46•], and college students [14•] add to a growing body of evidence that multiple lifetime encounters with extreme stressors place individuals at increased risk for developing PTSD. Compatible evidence is also found in samples of combat veterans [54•,55].

### Previous major depression

Blanchard *et al.* [46•] and North *et al.* [56•] provided complementary evidence that major depression is a risk

factor for PTSD diagnosis following a potentially traumatic experience.

### Postevent mediators

Mayou *et al.* [45•] identify 'horrific' intrusive memories in the first weeks after an accident as a strong predictor of PTSD at 1 year. Baum *et al.* [57] also summarize prospective findings from the Three Mile Island incident, Pennsylvania, USA, which indicate that intrusive memories have a negative impact on long-term adjustment. In a similar vein, Norris and Uhl [58] identify ongoing stress in areas such as marital and family relationships, finances, and physical health as mediators of the impact of natural disaster. Data from two other studies [39,59] support similar conclusions.

### Treatment

Solomon *et al.* [60] reviewed the few empirically based clinical trials of treatment for PTSD; little has changed in the past year. Conceptually, Keane *et al.* [61] proposed a cognitive-behavioral treatment model, and Shalev *et al.* [62] presented a heuristic biopsychosocial treatment model. In terms of psychopharmacology, Davidson *et al.* [63] reported further on their study of amitriptyline to treat combat-related PTSD. They found that patients who initially reported fewer symptoms and less distress improved the most in an 8-week trial. Finally, scientists and clinicians continue to debate the relative merits of eye-movement desensitization and reprocessing [64] for treating PTSD, awaiting evidence from randomized treatment outcome studies.

### Conclusion

At this time one can readily conclude that PTSD is a very common psychological disorder in the general population with overall prevalence rates ranging from 6–10% for a lifetime diagnosis. Among survivors of specific events, the prevalence rates are clearly much higher, often extending to 30% of all those who survive catastrophes such as combat military experiences and rape. As a result, the development of assessment and treatment methods are clear public health priorities. Efforts to identify survivors provide interventions designed to prevent the onset of disabling symptomatology, and to empirically study their efficacy are important future directions for research.

### References and recommended reading

Papers of particular interest, published within the annual period of review, have been highlighted as:

- of special interest
- of outstanding interest

1. Foa EB, Riggs DS, Dancu CV, Rothbaum BO: **Reliability and Validity of a Brief Instrument for Assessing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.** *J Traumatic Stress* 1993, 6:459–473.
2. Watson CG, Plemel D, DeMotts J, Howard MT, Tuorila J, Moog R, Thomas D, Anderson D: **A Comparison of Four PTSD Measures' Convergent Validities in Vietnam Veterans.** *J Traumatic Stress* 1994, 7:75–82.
3. King DW, King LA, Fairbank JA, Schlenger WE, Surface CR: **Enhancing the Precision of the Mississippi Scale for Combat-Related Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: An Application of Item Response Theory.** *Psychol Assessment* 1993, 5:457–471.

A novel approach to evaluating the effectiveness of individual test items for accurate measurement of PTSD. Item response theory may bolster current approaches for psychometric test development because it is able to determine the extent to which each test item contributes to the overall measurement of the construct under study. Using the Mississippi PTSD Scale, these authors demonstrated the usefulness of this psychometric method in developing and refining measures of diagnostic constructs.

4. Zimering R, Caddell JM, Fairbank JA, Keane TM: **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Vietnam Veterans: An Experimental Validation of the DSM-III Criteria.** *J Traumatic Stress* 1993, 6:327–342.

An experimental, laboratory-based study validating the diagnostic criteria for PTSD using objective measures in both a neutral and primed (emotionally activated) state. Results supported the inclusion of the various criteria as the tasks were generally able to distinguish PTSD individuals from those without PTSD.

5. Bremner JD, Steinberg M, Southwick SM, Johnson DR, Charney DS: **Use of the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Dissociative Disorders for Systematic Assessment of Dissociative Symptoms in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.** *Am J Psychiatry* 1993, 150:1011–1014.
6. Talbert FS, Braswell LC, Albrecht JW, Hyer LA, Boudewyns PA: **NEO-PI Profiles in PTSD as a Function of Trauma Level.** *J Clin Psychol* 1993, 49:663–669.
7. Bremner JD, Scott TM, Delany RC, Southwick SM, Mason JW, Johnson DR, Innis RB, McCarthy G, Charney DS: **Deficits in Short-Term Memory in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.** *Am J Psychiatry* 1993, 150:1015–1019.
8. Zalewski C, Thompson W, Gottesman I: **Comparison of Neuropsychological Test Performance in PTSD, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, and Control Vietnam Veterans.** *Assessment* 1994, 1:133–142.
9. Becker D, Lamb S: **Sex Bias in the Diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.** *Pro Psychol Res Pract* 1994, 25:55–61.
10. Pitman R, Orr SP, Lasko NB: **Effects of Intranasal Vasopressin and Oxytocin on Physiologic Responding During Personal Combat Imagery in Vietnam Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.** *Psychiatry Res* 1994, 48:107–117.
11. Shalev AY, Rogel-Fuchs Y: **Psychophysiology of the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: From Sulphur Fumes to Behavioral Genetics.** *Psychosom Med* 1993, 55:413–423.
12. McFarlane AC, Weber DL, Clark CR: **Abnormal Stimulus Processing in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.** *Biol Psychiatry* 1993, 34:311–320.
13. Resnick HS, Kilpatrick DG, Dansky BS, Saunders BE, Best CL: **Prevalence of Civilian Trauma and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in a Representative National Sample of Women.** *J Consult Clin Psychol* 1993, 61:984–991.

This study examined rates of exposure to potentially traumatic events and consequent psychological distress in a nationally representative sample

of women. Results for sexual assault indicated a prevalence rate of nearly 27% even though a strict definition of this crime was employed.

14. Vrana S, Lauterbach D: **Prevalence of Traumatic Events and Post-Traumatic Psychological Symptoms in a Nonclinical Sample of College Students.** *J Traumatic Stress* 1994, 7:289-302.

This study of the prevalence of potentially traumatic events in a college student population provides a demonstration of the fact that relatively high rates of potentially traumatic experiences, singly or multiply over the lifespan, are found even among the relatively young and affluent.

15. Norris FH, Kaniasty K: **Psychological Distress Following Criminal Victimization in the General Population: Cross-Sectional, Longitudinal, and Prospective Analysis.** *J Consult Clin Psychol* 1994, 62:111-123.

This methodologically strong study examined the effects of violent and nonviolent crime on individuals and compared psychological functioning over time with a nonvictimized comparison group. Findings particularly reflect the persistent effects on mental health of exposure to violent crime.

16. Loftus, EF: **The Reality of Repressed Memories.** *Am Psychol* 1993, 48:518-537.

This article provides an overview of the contemporary history of the set of issues being confronted at the interface between the legal and psychotherapy communities with respect to memory for traumatic experiences.

17. Feldman-Summers S, Pope KS: **The Experience of 'Forgetting' Childhood Abuse: A National Survey of Psychologists.** *J Consult Clin Psychol* 1994, 62:636-639.

The population under study offers partially offsetting advantages and disadvantages with respect to the generalizability of the findings. However, on balance, this investigation is a solid first effort to address the issue of forgotten trauma from an empirical perspective.

18. Southwick S, Yehuda R, Giller E: **Personality Disorders in Treatment-Seeking Combat Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.** *Am J Psychiatry* 1993, 150:1020-1023.

19. Yehuda R, Resnick H, Kahana B, Giller E: **Long-Lasting Hormonal Alterations to Extreme Stress in Humans: Normative or Maladaptive?** *Psychosom Med* 1993, 55:287-297.

An overview of one of the most active, promising lines of human investigation with respect to biological changes that are associated with chronic PTSD.

20. Yehuda R, Boissoneau D, Mason JW, Giller E: **Glucocorticoid Receptor Number and Cortisol Excretion in Mood, Anxiety, and Psychotic Disorders.** *Biol Psychiatry* 1993, 34:18-25.

21. Walker EA, Katon WJ, Roy-Byrne PP, Jemelka RP, Russo J: **Histories of Sexual Victimization in Patients with Irritable Bowel Syndrome or Inflammatory Bowel Disease.** *Am J Psychiatry* 1993, 150:1502-1506.

This study is noteworthy because it provides an independent replication, using stronger methodology, for two preliminary studies that suggested a potentially distinct relationship between adult functional bowel disorder and prior sexual abuse. Although this relationship appears to be one of many between physical disorders and abuse or trauma, the ability to focus on a group of individuals with a common disorder may prove beneficial for future exploration of mechanisms underlying the connection.

22. Barsky AJ, Wool C, Barnett MC, Cleary PD: **Histories of Childhood Trauma in Adult Hypochondriacal Patients.** *Am J Psychiatry* 1994, 151:397-401.

23. Kimerling R, Calhoun KS: **Somatic Symptoms, Social Support, and Treatment Seeking Among Sexual Assault Victims.** *J Consult Clin Psychol* 1994, 62:333-340.

24. Golding JM: **Sexual Assault History and Physical Health in Randomly Selected Los Angeles Women.** *Health Psychol* 1994, 13:130-138.

This secondary analysis of data from the Los Angeles component of the Epidemiologic Catchment Area project capitalizes on a sophisticated household sampling strategy and the use of face-to-face interviewing for data collection. An additional strength is the extensive questioning with regard to nature, characteristics, and consequences of their somatic symptoms. Overall, it provides an important perspective on the range of physical complaints and functional limitations of sexual assault victims who were not exclusively seeking treatment.

25. Vogel JM, Vernberg EM: **Part 1: Children's Psychological Response to Disasters.** *J Clin Child Psychol* 1993, 22:464-484.

26. Vernberg EM, Vogel JM: **Part 2: Interventions with Children after Disasters.** *J Clin Child Psychol* 1993, 22:485-498.

27. Green BL, Grace MC, Vary MG, Kramer TL, Gleser GC, Leonard AC: **Children of Disaster in the Second Decade: A 17-Year Follow-Up of Buffalo Creek Survivors.** *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry* 1994, 33:71-79.

This renewed examination of children survivors of the collapse of the Buffalo Creek Dam, West Virginia, USA, builds on the ground-breaking original set of studies by Green *et al.* Rates of PTSD declined dramatically from the initial examinations conducted by this team, dropping from 32 to 7%, a level which was no different from the rate of PTSD observed in a comparison community.

28. Pynoos RS, Goenjian A, Tashjian M, Karakashian M, Manjikian R, Manoukian G, Steinberg AM, Fairbanks LA: **Post-Traumatic Stress Reactions in Children After the 1988 Armenian Earthquake.** *Br J Psychiatry* 1993, 163:239-247.

29. Goenjian A: **A Mental Health Relief Programme in Armenia After the 1988 Earthquake: Implementation and Clinical Observation.** *Br J Psychiatry* 1993, 163:230-239.

30. Shannon MP, Lonigan CJ, Finch AJ, Taylor CM: **Children Exposed to Disaster: I. Epidemiology of Post-Traumatic Symptoms and Symptom Profiles.** *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry* 1994, 33:80-93.

31. Durkin MS, Khan N, Davidson LL, Zaman SS, Stein ZA: **The Effects of a Natural Disaster on Child Behavior: Evidence for Posttraumatic Stress.** *Am J Public Health* 1993, 83:1549-1553.

32. Sutker PB, Uddo M, Brailey K, Allain AN, Errera P: **Psychological Symptoms and Psychiatric Diagnoses in Operation Desert Storm Troops Serving Graves Registration Duty.** *J Traumatic Stress* 1994, 7:159-171.

A noteworthy paper because of the high rates of PTSD among those studied (nearly 50%) and the associated evidence of depression and substance abuse. These findings indicate that individuals assigned to noncombat duties can have strikingly increased risk for disability and psychological maladjustment.

33. McCarroll JE, Ursano RJ, Ventis WL, Fullerton CS, Friedman H, Shean GD, Wright KM: **Anticipation of Handling the Dead: Effects of Gender and Experience.** *Br J Clin Psychol* 1993, 32:466-468.

34. McCarroll JE, Ursano RJ, Fullerton CS, Lundy A: **Traumatic Stress of a Wartime Mortuary: Anticipation of Exposure to Mass Death.** *J Nerv Ment Dis* 1993, 181:545-551.

35. McCarroll JE, Ursano RJ, Fullerton CS: **Symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Following Recovery of War Dead.** *Am J Psychiatry* 1993, 150:1875-1877.

Handling bodies after combat is an especially stressful duty assignment and emphasizes the need for significant levels of training, education, and inoculation to avert the negative psychological effects of this experience.

36. Perconte ST, Dietrick AL, Wilson AT, Spiro KJ, Pontius EB: **Psychological and War Stress Among Deployed and Non-Deployed Reservists Following the Persian Gulf War.** *Mil Med* 1993, 158:516-521.

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# Breathing-related disorders

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This article is based on the premise that the study of respiratory psychophysiology provides a bridge between psychology and physiology. Events during the past year which mark significant advances in the study of respiratory psychophysiology are discussed and timely articles on a broad range of topics relevant to disordered breathing are noted. Special emphasis is given to theoretical and clinical studies of hyperventilation-related psychiatric complaints and their treatment, and to new directions in the study of stress and its relationship to breathing.

Current Opinion in Psychiatry 1994, 7:486–489

## Introduction

The relationship between disordered breathing and psychiatric disorders is not broadly understood. Part of the reason for this probably harks back to the traditional separation of body and soul or corpse and spirit: life begins with inspiration (the body incorporating the spirit) and ends with expiration (the body giving up the spirit). Although few scientists would openly support the Cartesian notion of body–mind dualism, some would argue that there is a clear distinction between psychology and physiology beyond that of a convenient dialectic convention within biology. A simple example from the study of respiratory psychophysiology that demonstrates how breathing provides a bridge between psychology and physiology is volitional overbreathing. Cognitive initiation of rapid and strong contractions of the diaphragm and intercostal muscles while resting (i.e. low metabolic demand for oxygen) will lead quickly to hyperventilatory hypocapnia (diminished arterial  $\text{CO}_2$  and elevated pH) and produce an almost immediate increase in heart rate [1], decrease in parasympathetic activation [2], increase in electrodermal conductivity [3] (Sanderson W, unpublished dissertation), decrease in blood flow to the brain [2] with a decrease in dissociation of oxygen from hemoglobin (cerebral hypoxia) [4•]. If some psychiatric disorders are a manifestation of faulty cognition, if cognition is a product of the brain's activity, and if the brain's activity is dependent on an adequate supply of oxygen, then the connection between disordered breathing and psychiatric disorders should be clear.

Another part of the reason for the narrowly understood relationship between disordered breathing and psychiatric disorders may lie in problems of measurement. Because respiration rate, tidal volume, and minute volume cannot be interpreted independently of metabolic demand, the direct measurement of the reduction in the partial pressure of arterial  $\text{CO}_2$  that defines hyperventilation is limited to invasive techniques of assaying sam-

ples of arterial plasma. Although the determination of the proportion of  $\text{CO}_2$  in the end-tidal peak of expired air by means of gas analyzers provides a very accurate and highly reliable noninvasive estimate of partial pressure of arterial  $\text{CO}_2$ , this method seems to have escaped the attention of psychotherapists. The reason for this may also lie in tradition: psychotherapists study the mind and physiologists study the body. Perhaps the time has arrived for a rapprochement; perhaps respiratory psychophysiology provides a bridge [5].

## Recent advances in respiratory psychophysiology

The cognitive deficit that results from hyperventilation-induced cerebral hypoxia is a central theme in Fried's recent book [4•,6], one of several noteworthy events in the study of respiratory psychophysiology to occur during the past year. This book's first person singular presentation provides a unique voice which will ease the reader's journey through the complex regions of biological factors involved in breathing (anatomy and physiology of the respiratory system; the circulatory system and the heart, blood, and red blood cells; capnometry; hyperventilation and the endocrine, cardiovascular and nervous system), psychosomatic disorders (and clinical applications of breathing training in their treatment), and neurological hypothetical constructs designed to explain some puzzling symptoms that present in the clinic.

Another timely event which suggests that the study of respiratory psychophysiology has come of age was the formal announcement of the organization of the International Society for the Advancement of Respiratory Psychophysiology. This was put forward at the XIIth International Symposium on Respiratory Psychophysiology held in London, UK, in September, 1993. This 3-day conference, hosted by Lewis Adams of the Char-